



Memorandum

**TO: Honorable Mayor and
City Council**

**FROM: Councilmember
Nora Campos**

SUBJECT: Sunshine Reform Task Force

DATE: April 17, 2006

Approved:

Date:

4/17/06

RECOMMENDATION

City Council approves the framework for Sunshine Reform Task Force with the following changes:

1. Direct Staff to re-design the Sunshine Reform Task Force composition in way that ensures the membership reflects the cultural diversity of San José.
2. Replace Technology Seat on Task Force with an additional seat for a member of a San Jose Board and Commission. Technology expert should be a staff or consultant position.
3. Replace one of the two business interest seats on the Task Force with seat for one of San José's Community Based Organization/Non Profit partners.

BACKGROUND

On April 5, 2006, City Manager Les White submitted the Administration's proposal for framework of the Sunshine Reform Task Force. Included in the Administration's proposal are recommended categories of stakeholders and a selection process for consideration by Council. I compliment the hard work conducted by staff and appreciate the timeliness of the Administration's recommendations.

To guide the framework for public engagement in the development of Sunshine reforms, Staff suggested a number of criteria in attempt to create an open and balanced process for the selection of Task Force members. Included in staff's proposal was the statement:

"The task force should reflect the diversity of our community."

While Staff makes an effort to suggest a membership with a variety of stakeholders and interests, I believe more can be done to ensure that the composition of the Sunshine Reform Task Force reflects San José's diverse population.

According the 2000 Census, the City of San José is 36% Anglo, 30.2% Latino, and 26.9 % Asian. In addition, the Census showed that San José is split almost evenly between men and women. A public engagement process designed to make recommendations in the areas of the distribution of public information, meaningful neighborhood participation, and greater government accountability should be reflective of the community it intends to serve. Further

revisions should be made to the composition of the Task Force to ensure that this diversity is taken into account when selecting membership.

I also believe there can be more room for community involvement. A Task Force whose mission is to make government more public should include an overwhelming number of seats reserved for the public. One way this can be accomplished is by replacing the seat reserved for the Technology expert with an additional seat for a member of San José's Boards and Commissions, which only have one seat in the current proposal. The purpose of a Technology seat is to provide expertise when considering technologies that can assist the City in achieving the goals of accessibility and openness. I believe this advisory role can be achieved through the use of the City's Information Technology staff, or if expertise does not exist in the City, through the hiring of an outside consultant.

Community Based Organizations and Non-Profit Agencies are taking a greater role in providing programs and services in cases where the City of San José can no longer afford to. Due to their increasing role in our city, a member of the CBO/Non-Profit community should also be added or should replace one of the Task Force's duplicative seats. The Administration has suggested two business interest seats (San Jose/Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce & Silicon Valley Leadership Group) for the Task Force. San José's interests would best be served if one of these seats were replaced to accommodate San José's non profit partners.

History has shown us that when we make it possible for all people to be equally and fully engaged, San José has benefited. The passage of District Elections helped San José elect its first Latina Councilmember. Last year, the first Vietnamese-American Councilmember was elected, allowing a previously unrepresented community to have a seat on the City Council. San José has long tradition of reform that consistently strives to ensure all members of the public can equally participate. The composition of the Sunshine Reform Task Force should reflect this tradition to ensure that all of our voices are heard.